

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: June 20, 2001

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-56)

TO: John Baugher - KEWN
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Mining Reach of the Wind River and Dry Creek Rehabilitation

Project No: 98-019-00

Work Order No: 00083320

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.6 Install Large Woody Debris (LWD) Structures; 1.8 Bank Protection Through Vegetation Management; 2.1 Maintain Healthy Riparian Plant Communities.

Location: Wind River Watershed (Wind Subbasin), Skamania County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the USDA Forest Service.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund a project that will enhance riparian areas and in-stream habitat within the Wind River watershed in Washington. The USDA Forest Service has developed a series of restoration activities in the Wind River watershed that will improve habitat conditions and facilitate the recovery of wild steelhead populations to numbers assuring their persistence and allowing for healthy expression of genetic diversity and life history. This component of the Forest Service's program will increase the density of native conifers and restore large woody debris within the Wind River. The Forest Service will thin two river miles (70 acres) of riparian area over-story and under-plant three river miles (74 acres) of homogeneous riparian hardwood and coniferous stands along 6.4 miles of the Wind River. The Forest Service will maintain riparian plants and channel structures. The Forest Service will also place 400 key pieces of LWD in two river miles of the Wind River to achieve natural levels of wood and channel stability.

Since 1994 the Wind River Restoration Team (WRRT) has engaged in a multifaceted restoration program in the Wind River watershed. The WRRT is a collaborative effort of the Wind River Ranger District (now Mt. Adams Ranger District) of the Forest Service, Underwood Conservation District, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the US Geological Survey. Past physical restoration projects focused on road obliteration, riparian reforestation, channel rehabilitation and restoration of fish passage.

Added financial support from BPA has expanded the efforts of the WRRT to support a monitoring and evaluation program, along with a comprehensive public education outreach and assessment agenda. The WRRT is in its third year of funding from BPA. The current work program is a continuation of efforts, which were initiated by the Forest Service in 1999. The restoration activities considered in this Supplement Analysis are one portion of a larger *Statement of Work* for fiscal years 2001-2002.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Brian Bair of the USDA Forest Service and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). In addition, in April 1999, a *Middle/Mining Reach and Dry Creek Rehabilitation Project Environmental Assessment* was completed by the USDA Forest Service that includes an analysis of the instream activities proposed under this project.

Chum, coho and chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout are the potentially affected listed threatened or endangered species occurring in the vicinity of the proposed project. The WRRT consulted with the National Marine Fisheries Service on March 10, 1998 regarding chum, coho and chinook salmon, and steelhead trout. The US Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted regarding bull trout on April 6, 1998. It was determined that no bull trout are present in the project area. A programmatic Biological Assessment (BA) for forest management practices on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest was completed in 1996. A programmatic BA for on-going Forest Service activities affecting Lower Columbia River steelhead within the southwest Washington provinces was completed in 1998.

WRRT contacted the Washington State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Yakama Indian Nation in March 1998 regarding historic and archeological resources in the project area. A Cultural Resource Survey conducted by the SHPO (FSM 2361.420) indicated the potential for significant cultural resources. To address potential impacts to cultural resources, the restoration program has incorporated a programmatic cultural resources management plan. All sites with cultural resources identified in the survey have been excluded from the project area.

Vegetation control, thinning, and planting constitute a major portion of the proposed project. All vegetation manipulation is for the purpose of improving and/or restoring riparian and aquatic habitat. The Forest Service has previously documented appropriate environmental analysis of the effects of its vegetation management operations in the USDA Forest Service *Final EIS for Managing Competing and Unwanted Vegetation* (1988).

The placement of large woody debris within the channel has been addressed through prior consultation and the Biological Assessments mentioned above. In addition, the Forest Service has contacted the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding in-stream work. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has issued a Hydraulic Permit Approval, and the Corps of Engineers has issued a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. This Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and, 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required. This Supplement Analysis covers only those activities identified in the description of the proposed action and referred to in the NEPA compliance checklist. Continued work associated with the USDA Forest Service FY 2001-2002 *Statement of Work* including, but not limited to, fisheries and habitat monitoring and assessment activities and fish passage and aquatic ecosystem restoration at Hemlock Dam, will require additional NEPA documentation.

/s/ Richard Yarde

Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 6-22-01

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist

cc: (w/ attachments)

Brian Bair, USDA Forest Service

bcc: (w/o attachments)

L. Croff - KEC-4

N. Weintraub - KEC-4

P. Key - LC-7

bcc: (w/ attachments)

Official File - KEC (EQ-14)

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